The

Non-Subscribing Presbyterian

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Notes of the Month.

When the present issue of this magazine reaches our readers another year will be dawning. May they enter upon it with cheerfulness and confidence, and may all its events confirm them therein. We trust that it will prove one of joy and happiness for them and theirs, a year of steady progress and of increasing satisfaction. Last year was a period of unusually stirring events. During the first half the coronation of our gracious King and Queen was the all-absorbing topic in the papers, and towards the close of the year the reception afforded to them in India was a fitting and triumphant sequel. From an international point of view the horizon was dark with clouds, but fortunately the settlement of the Morocco question made the outlook somewhat brighter. At the same time the end of the year has not seen the conclusion of the war in Tripoli. Ere long, however, we hope that nothing will remain to retard the cause of peace, or to prevent its continuance throughout the world. To this end we should like to see throughout the New Year the heartiest co-operation among those who are doing their utmost to promote friendliness and good-will among the leading nations of Europe. In this work it is possible for the members of all the Christian Churches to engage without any fear of mutual suspicion or hostility, and we hope that the next twelve months may record considerable progress in this Christian undertaking.

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Our congregation at Dromore is incalculably the poorer by the loss of the late Mr. J. R. Miniss. For many years he had rendered it faithful and unostentatious service, and was ever ready to give freely of his best for its support and furtherance. But not content with that, he was the servant of every good and righteous cause, irrespective of theological differences, and many persons outside our own community will realise now more than ever the value of his devotion and generosity. With them, as well as with the members of the Dromore congregation, we most heartily sympathise, and trust that the example of self-sacrifice he left will summon others to follow that example of devoted service for God and for man.

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We shall publish next month the first list of donations to the Sustentation Fund. Already over £5,000 has been promised, of which sum about £4,000 has been received. Promises sent in by the 20th inst. will be inserted in the list.

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In a recent issue of the *Spectator* there appeared a letter dealing with a criticism of

"The Case of Richard Meynell," Mrs. Humphry Ward's latest book. After a short opening paragraph, the letter proceeds as follows:—"Mrs. Ward, in the opinion of many Churchmen and Church reformers like myself, is doing good and useful work, and is doing it with tact, discretion, and moderation. Is our country so decadent mentally as to believe that a creed formulated in the early centuries of Christianity by men without knowledge or opportunity for knowledge of history or of science, a creed manipulated, mystified, and garbled in many of its details by mediæval priestcraft, is to be accepted in all its minutiæ, and for all time, as sacred and as eternal truth? Are we so hypnotized by a clergy sworn to hold and inculcate belief in their thirty-nine immutable Articles as to accept a sixteenth-century Reformation as the last word in the improvement of our Church, as amply sufficient to maintain its power and influence for good in our modern life? Are expansion and improvement admissible in everything except in religious belief and religious ordinances? Are all demands for Church reform to be disregarded; are all we who humbly but firmly claim 'the privileged and honoured name' of Christians to be silenced when Parliament and Convocation refuse or neglect to banish the unChristian Athanasian Creed, when they permit and ratify such abuses as the sale of Church livings?"

* *

The foregoing extract may not be found to contain anything new to our readers, but it will perhaps possess an interest for them in that it indicates the presence of a body of men within the bounds of the Anglican Church who see the great problem as we have seen it, and who are evidently striving to find a solution thereof. Indeed, there is ample and conclusive evidence on every side that where theology is concerned the need for the principle of Non-Subscription cannot be suppressed. Only recently a protest against "worn-out dogmas" in the Church was made in Westminster Abbey by Rev. H. Mayne Young, curate to Canon Wilberforce, at St. John's, Westminster, who said that the worn-out theology of the past needed to be readjusted and restated in order that it might supply the needs of a progressive people. Every age had a right to clear statements about religion, and they must be of current coin. Would the Church admit a new form of creed into her services now? Is there the faintest possibility that it would for a moment be considered? Was it cowardice or mistrust of the spirit of truth which had made her resign this freedom and become tied down to a special form of words? But the day was not distant when, unless the Church of England freely restated her creeds, so as to meet the requirements of the age, she would be left stranded, while the tide of this modern life would leave her behind, a warning of the results of an iron-bound system of worn-out dogmas.

* *

Whilst many clergymen are content to work from within for a concession of freedom of thought, others, impatient of the long delay, and unable to proceed under the heavy burden of Subscription to "worn-out dogmas," find no alternative but to secede. Here is a striking example of the latter kind. After holding for eleven years the living of Gailey parish, Penkridge, Staffordshire, the Rev. Tom Primrose Castley has resigned his pastorate. He says: "I find it absolutely impossible to assent to many of those doctrines which are supposed to form the foundation upon which the church is built. Religion and theology are two very different things. Neither the Bible nor the Church can be infallible. An officer of the Church is bound by the doctrines of the Church. If he cannot loyally assent to them he must give up the charge. If the Church orders me as one of her ministers to proclaim certain things as facts which I do not in my own mind believe, the only thing is to give up my ministry. I cannot go on saying these things with all sorts of reservations in my own mind, apologising to God, as it were, for uttering in public and in formal language what I could not say privately that I firmly and without hesitation believe. I certainly cannot go on receiving the Church's money under such circumstances. I cannot sacrifice my conscience for the sake of friends, money, or anything else." The Bishop of Lichfield, accepting the resignation, says he deeply regrets the cause, but adds that he has no doubt that the vicar is acting in all good conscience, the dictates of which all must

obey. The living of Gailey is worth £290 a year and a residence."

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Dr. John Campbell is anxious to include in his History of the Non-Subscribing Presbyterian Church the pedigrees of families at present connected with any of our congregations, and will be thankful to those who will supply them to him.

* *

Copies of the issues of this Magazine for January, March, and May, 1908, and May, 1909, are required to complete sets for binding. Any subscriber having spare copies of these issues will oblige by sending same to Rev. G. J. Slipper, Newry (posted flat), who will remit payment for same.

"IT IS HIGH TIME!"

A THOUGHT FOR THE NEW YEAR.

[By an 'Evangelical' Unitarian.]

I am going to write about a few commonplace truths. A commonplace is a truth which everybody is so sure of that he does not bother about it. As Coleridge says: "Truths, of all others the most awful and interesting, are often considered as so true that they lose all the *power* of truth, and lie bed-ridden in the dormitory of the soul. . . . To restore a commonplace truth to its first uncommon lustre, you need only to translate it into action." We live in an age of high adventure in truth-seeking. We have "new thoughts," new theologies, new religions, new doubts, new affirmations, and new negations. The reading public are deluged with novel theories, and the pursuit of changing philosophies has become positively exciting and bewildering. Like the Athenians of old, some of us have leisure for nothing else but either to tell or to hear some new thing. All this is right enough for those who are strong enough and wise enough to steer a straight course, but there is danger that amidst this restless search for new truth, old, well-tried, commonplace truths may suffer neglect.

One of these old truths is suggested by the passing of the old year, and the coming of the new. We are reminded at such a season of the swift passage of the current of time, which bears us mortals through the known into the unknown. The years seem to pass with swifter and more stealthy movement, as we grow older. We recognise that life's voyage is brief and uncertain. And when we think of the mystery of what we call time, and our relation to it, the fact stands out clear and undeniable—that the only hour that we can be sure of is the present hour—nay, the present minute. *Now* is the only time that is ours for action. The past is—past, gone, irrevocable. The future will be—but *what* it will be, and what we shall be in it, we know not, and cannot know. We have memories of the past, and visions and hopes of the future. But for action, decision, for doing what we want to do, and being what we desire to be, *now* is the only acceptable time.

This, as I warned you, is a commonplace, but it is a truth of all others "the most awful and interesting." It ceases to be commonplace only when we translate it into action. The pity of it is—we don't act upon it, we neglect it. The commonplace is the place where we fail. We act, or do not act, as though any season were more convenient than now. "To-morrow, and to-morrow, and to-morrow."

> "To-morrow—
> That fatal mistress of the young, the lazy,
> The coward, and the fool! condemned to lose
> A useless life in waiting on to-morrow."

I suggest one brief, practical application of this thought to religion. The Apostle Paul wrote to the church in Rome this appeal:—"It is high time for you to awake out of sleep. . . . our salvation is nearer than when we first believed. The night is far spent: the day is at hand. Cast off the works of darkness. . . . put on the Lord Jesus Christ." We all feel the note of urgency in these words. Therein lies the strength of their appeal. "It is high time," that is, the time for attaining the Christ-like character is now, and that time is limited. This urgent note rings out in the teaching of Christ, and sounds its solemn warning throughout the New Testament and the Christian centuries. We have largely lost it to-day, and it is imperative that we should recover it, unless the Christian church is to lose her influence on man. We must convince

ourselves and others that the message we have to deliver from God is not only important but urgent. But can we sincerely and earnestly say "it is high time," and that man's plea of "time enough" will not do in relation to the life which God, through Christ, calls us to. On what grounds can we base our appeal?

In bare outline, I suggest the following reasons for the urgency of our religious message.

1.—Because of the greatness, the goodness, and the glory of the Christian's inheritance. The life that God gives is the only blessed life for man, and to miss it even for a year or a day, is loss; to miss it altogether and finally, is death. It is high time to put on the Lord Jesus Christ, because we are wasting our lives without him. Carlyle wrote: "That there should one man die ignorant who had capacity for knowledge, this I call a tragedy." True, but if one man should live and die ignorant of the way, the truth, and the life which Jesus reveals, this is a greater tragedy.

2.—Because there is real danger in delay. We cannot reckon on the future, not even on to-morrow (See Jesus' Parable of the rich fool). Opportunities neglected sometimes never return. The only safe course is—Seek ye the Lord while he may be found; call ye upon him while he is near. The longer we put off manly effort and decision to learn to do good and to cease to do evil, the more difficult will it be for us to do the right, and to give up the evil. Sin hardens us, and habit makes us its slaves.

3.—There is a possibility that we may delay too long; wait until it is too late. We know that it is so in this life; we do not know what is beyond this life. Jesus solemnly warns us of this terrible possibility. We may put off entering the door of life until we are incapable of entering. We may miss our opportunity, and it may be true of us, as of Jerusalem: If thou hadst known in this thy day, even thou, the things that belong to peace—but now they are hidden from thy sight.

This is not a call for panic or what is called sudden conversion. It is a call for the recognition in our religion of a fact, commonplace but neglected, that if religion is the most important thing in life, it is also the most urgent. Truth, love, life—the truth, the love, the life of Christ—these are man's highest destiny. If we do not seek them *now*, we may lose them. It is high time, now—the only time that is ours.

OUR NON-SUBSCRIBING CHURCH: HOW DID IT ARISE?

By Rev. W. S. Smith.

WHEN the Rev. John Abernethy, M.A., was ordained minister of what is now the Old Presbyterian congregation of Antrim in 1703, there was no Non-Subscribing Presbyterian Church in Ireland, and there was not the slightest indication that one would spring from the spiritual insight and moral force of the young minister. Yet he was, without doubt, the founder of Non-Subscription in Ireland. When a master-mind commands, others will obey. When it leads, others will follow. Such a mind was that of the Rev. John Abernethy.

His leadership, however, did not become conspicuous until he had been resident in Antrim many years. His learning, commanding abilities, and tone of mind led to his being acknowledged as the leader of men, who had experienced the influence of the "free spirit" in their quest for truth. It had been decreed at the meeting of the Synod of Ulster in Antrim in 1705, and re-asserted in 1720, that all candidates for the ministry in connection with the Synod should declare their assent to the doctrines of the *Westminster Confession of Faith*. But where, it was felt by some, could there be freedom of spirit, freedom in the acceptance of truth, if, in their religious investigations, ministers were compelled to abide by the decisions of their forefathers? How unlike conduct in other walks of life! Imagine Dr. Priestley being told that he must not try to discover more of nature's secrets in connection with light, electricity, and air than other philosophers had discovered. The one case is analagous to the other. Mr. Abernethy, taking a broad view of things in general, could not confine his spiritual vision within the lines desired by the advocates of Subscription. So he joined with a number of other ministers

who desired to keep their minds open to fresh light, and formed a society, known as the Belfast Society, for the discussion of knotty points connected with theology and Scripture. For such presumption he and and those associated with him were to suffer the fate of too many who have advocated unpopular principles. They were suspected, slighted, spoken against, written against, and at last, voted against and ejected from the chief court of the Presbyterian Church—The General Synod of Ulster. This final step was not taken, however, for many years after the formation of the Belfast Society. A pamphlet war was engaged in, when a good deal of ink was used, and some bad temper displayed. But at length the ecclesiastical muskets ceased to rattle, and cannons to boom, and the combatants came to close quarters. This was at the annual meeting of Synod, held in 1726, in the town of Dungannon. Here the final struggle took place. Prior to this, in 1725, all the ministers and their congregations who favoured Non-Subscription in reference to the *Westminster Confession of Faith* had been included within the Presbytery of Antrim. At the meeting in 1726, the Non-Subscribers were called upon to declare exactly what their doctrinal principles were, and the Subscribers in their turn were called upon to say in what sense they understood certain articles, Subscription to which, it was maintained being no safeguard against ulterior meanings. Then some of the Subscribers proposed that the *Confession* should be gone over article by article, and each minister declare in what sense it was to be understood; to which the Revs. John Abernethy and Samuel Haliday cordially assented, and the Rev. J. Kirkpatrick also, providing sufficient time were allowed to discuss them. Others would accept the proposal in a qualified sense only. One minister described the suggestion as an "inquisition," to which he would not submit, unless the examination were conducted with deliberation, carefully comparing statements of the *Confession*, with those of Scripture. At this suggestion some called out, "Shall we stay here all the year, and examine our faith over again?" "Would you have us go through every article." Messrs. Abernethy and Haliday again signified their willingness to say in what sense they accepted or rejected the various articles. But the situation became greatly strained, and apparently somewhat confused, when the cry "Proceed! Proceed! A vote! A vote! We have had reasoning enough," arose. After a time the critical and deciding vote was taken as to whether Synod should stand for Subscription or Non Subscription, and it decided in favour of Subscription! This was a severe blow to Mr. Abernethy and his party, for it meant for the Non-Subscribers isolation, the deprivation of ecclesiastical jurisdiction and ministerial communion—their ejection from the Synod, in fact. Henceforth, they must stand aside and provide for their own government and discipline. Though condemned to comparative loneliness and the loss of co-operation, the Non-Subscribers would be free from the bondage of Subscription, and at liberty to develop their theological thought. They would be free to enjoy the sunshine of truth, and to follow where that truth should lead. Not all of those excluded from the General Synod of Ulster remained faithful to Non-Subscription. Some repented and retraced their steps. Nevertheless, theological liberty has been maintained in the north of Ireland for 185 years—105 by the Presbytery of Antrim singly, and 81 years by that body and the Remonstrant Synod of Ulster, unitedly. And it is now to be perpetuated by the Non-Subscribing Presbyterian Church of Ireland.

THE NON-SUBSCRIBING PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF IRELAND.

TEMPERANCE MEETING.

UNDER the auspices of the Temperance Committee of the above Church, a Conference and Public Meeting were held in the First Presbyterian Church, Holywood, on Wednesday, 22nd November. The attendances at both meetings were very satisfactory, and in addition to several ladies, there were present Miss H. M. Johnston, of Liverpool, representing the National Unitarian

Temperance Association; Revs. H. J. Rossington, G. L. Phelps, M. Watkins, J. D. Davies J. A. Kelly, J. Worthington, F. Woolley, S. E. Bowen, T. Munn, J. Barron, G. J. Slipper, Convener; Messrs. H. A. Magowan, Elmes, Liverpool; H. Barnes, and others.

Apologies were received from the Revs. T. Dunkerley (Moderator), and Rev. E. Lockett.

The Conference was opened with devotional exercises, conducted by the Rev. T. Munn, and the Rev. G. L. Phelps who presided, welcomed the visitors, and introduced the Rev. M. Watkins, who read a paper on "Legislation or Persuasion," an outline of which appeared in the last number of the magazine.

The discussion which followed was opened by the Rev. J. D. Davies, and other speakers were Miss Johnson, Rev. J. Worthington, Mr. H. A. Magowan, and the Chairman.

The usual thanks to the reader of the paper, and opener of discussion were heartily accorded on the motion of the Rev. J. A. Kelly, seconded by the Rev. S. E. Bowen.

Tea was served at the close of the Conference by the kind hospitality of the ladies of the congregation.

The Public Meeting was opened with devotional exercises by Rev. S. E. Bowen, and the Chairman, Rev. G. L. Phelps, addressed the meeting.

The following speakers also dealt with various phases of the Temperance question:—Mr. F. Woolley, who spoke on the "Practical issue of Temperance Work;" Miss Johnson, who spoke upon "Temperance Work at Home and Abroad;" Mr. A. M'I. Cleland, who dealt with "Personal Influence in Temperance Work;" and the Rev. J. Barron, spoke on "Total Abstinence and the Young People."

In the course of an interesting address, Mr. Woolley said—"I speak entirely from the standpoint of my own field of labour. Take as an instance the Temperance problem in relation to the child. The emphasis placed upon child-life to-day deepens and strengthens, and people everywhere are beginning to realise that no effort can be too great, no sacrifice too severe, when the effort and the sacrifice are made with a view to properly training the child and equipping him or her for the struggle and conflict of life. Years ago Ruskin said, 'It is the law of good economy to make the best of everything —how much more to make the best of every human creature.' But are we making the best of child-life to-day? I refer of course to the neglected children in the slums of our great cities. In Belfast there are whole streets which hide hundreds of blighted families. The filthy side-walks swarm with children—men and women of the future!—whose faces know no smiles; children who have lost even the power to cry, and know only how to suffer, many of whom indeed, if doctors are to be believed came into the world drunk. Note these little ones in their growth, and presently you will observe the weaknesses of their parents developing in them as they grow. When an epidemic falls upon them, these children drop like flies, and often have I been unable to pray with other than the voice of thankfulness when one of these unfortunate ones has been taken from the evil to come. This question of the children must and will in the coming time claim an ever-increasing importance in the work of the Temperance reformer, and he, the reformer, will recognise that on account of the well-being of the children, if for no other reason, he is at issue with the drink question. In my opinion here lies the real problem of Belfast, and I say emphatically that the true patriot is not the man who shouts out his party politics, but the one who sees the glory or the shame of his country in its morality! who seeks first the kingdom of God in the lives and souls of its people."

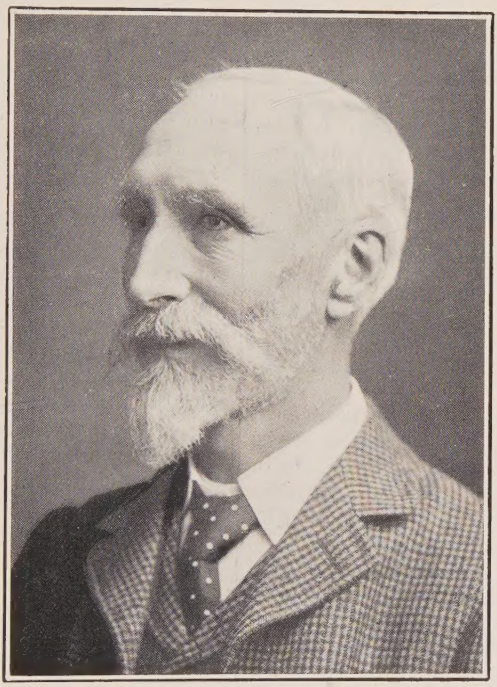
During the evening musical items were rendered by Miss Kitty Neill, Miss Murphy, and Mr. Gordon May. Miss Munster kindly acted as accompanist.

Owing to the lateness of the hour, it was found impossible to move a formal vote of thanks to the various speakers and helpers at the conclusion of the meeting, but all who were present felt that very successful meetings had been held, and were grateful to the Committee and ladies of the Holywood congregation for the hospitable welcome accorded to the Temperance Committee in this first provincial meeting arranged by them.

Obituary.

MR. JOHN ROWAN MINISS, J.P.

BEFORE this issue is in the hands of our readers they will have heard of the death of Mr. J. R. Miniss, which took place at his residence, Mossvale House, Dromore, on the evening of Sunday, the 9th ult., after a short illness. Some few weeks ago a slight improvement gave hope that the crisis had been safely passed, but the change proved temporary. Mr. Miniss had attained the age of almost 70—a fact which will surprise most of those who were aware of his energy in business affairs and of his active public life. He was the eldest son of the late Rev. W. B. Miniss, sometime minister of our congregation at Dromore. After his retirement from the ministry, Mr. Miniss continued to reside in Dromore, where Mr. John Miniss and his brothers had founded the linen business, since conducted under their joint management. Eminently successful in business, Mr. Miniss brought the qualities that there distinguished him into every movement for the good of the town and district. He acted for very many years with conspicuous ability and unfailing courtesy as presiding Magistrate at Petty Sessions; but the work which, perhaps, appealed to him most was educational and social. He was a Trustee and Treasurer of the Cowan-Heron Cottage Hospital since its foundation, and the success of that institution is, in no small degree, due to his zeal and unremitting attention to even the smallest detail conducive to efficiency and usefulness. In the sphere of education also he took a leading place as Chairman of the Reading Room and Technical Education Committees, where his efforts led to the establishment of successful classes under an able staff of teachers. Always modest, even to the point of diffidence, concerning the value of his own work, not only in the matters we have alluded to, but in others where he came into direct contact with the poorest and most helpless—in his capacity, for instance, of Poor Law Guardian—Mr. Miniss deprecated any public reference to his services, and this fact makes the task of giving an adequate appreciation of the man one of peculiar difficulty. Those who knew him best feel that their admiration for a singularly noble and unselfish life disposes rather to silence than to speech. Our Dromore congregation has lost in him one of its most devoted members, and an untiring worker. His influence will long be felt not only within the borders of our own Church, but throughout the community where his wide culture and quiet helpfulness diffused a spirit of toleration and sympathy only too rare in our midst. Such a life spent, as it was, largely in the service of others is in truth a priceless heritage and an inspiration which dispels the gloom if it cannot relieve the sadness of Farewell.



THE LATE MR. J. R. MINISS, J.P.

Demand of every common thing of life, whether it be your body or your money or your daily experience, that it shall bloom to fine results in your own soul and in your influence upon the world.

THE FORM OF PRESBYTERIAL CHURCH GOVERNMENT.

Approved of the General Assembly of the Kirk of Scotland, February 10, 1645.

Of Ordination of Ministers.

Under the head of ordination of ministers, is to be considered, either the doctrine of ordination, or the power of it.

Touching the Doctrine of Ordination.

No man ought to take upon him the office of a minister of the Word without a lawful calling.

Ordination is always to be continued in the church.

Ordination is the solemn setting apart of a person to some public church-office.

Every minister of the Word is to be ordained by imposition of hands and prayer, with fasting, by those preaching presbyters to whom it doth belong.

It is agreeable to the Word of God, and very expedient, that such as are to be ordained ministers be designed to some particular church or other ministerial charge.

He that is to be ordained minister must be duly qualified both for life and ministerial abilities, according to the rules of the apostle.

He is to be examined and approved by those by whom he is to be ordained.

No man is to be ordained a minister for a particular congregation if they of that congregation can shew just cause of exception against him.

Touching the Power of Ordination.

Ordination is the act of a presbytery. The power of ordering the whole work of ordination is in the whole presbytery, which, when it is over more congregations than one, whether those congregations be fixed or not fixed, in regard of officers or members, it is indifferent as to the point of ordination.

It is very requisite that no single congregation that can conveniently associate, do assume to itself all and sole power in ordination.

1. Because there is no example in Scripture that any single congregation, which might conveniently associate, did assume to itself all and sole power in ordination; neither is there any rule which may warrant such a practice.

2. Because there is in Scripture example of an ordination in a presbytery over divers congregations; as in the church of Jerusalem, where were many congregations, these many congregations were under one presbytery, and this presbytery did ordain.

The preaching presbyters orderly associated, either in cities or neighbouring villages, are those to whom the imposition of hands doth appertain, for those congregations within their bounds respectively.

THE DIRECTORY FOR THE ORDINATION OF MINISTERS.

Upon the day appointed for ordination, which is to be performed in the church where he that is to be ordained is to serve, a solemn fast shall be kept by the congregation, that they may the more earnestly join in prayer for a blessing upon the ordinance of Christ, and the labours of his servant for their good. The presbytery shall come to the place, or at least three or four ministers of the Word shall be sent thither from the presbytery; of which one appointed by the presbytery shall preach to the people concerning the office and duty of ministers of Christ, and how the people ought to receive them for their work's sake.

After the sermon the minister who hath preached shall, in face of the congregation, demand of him who is now to be ordained, concerning his faith in Christ Jesus, and his persuasion of the truth of the reformed religion, according to the Scripture; his sincere intentions and ends in desiring to enter into this calling; his diligence in praying, reading, meditation, preaching, ministering the sacraments, discipline, and doing all ministerial duties towards his charge; his zeal and faithfulness in maintaining the truth of the gospel and unity of the church against error and schism; his care that himself and his family may be unblameable and examples to the flock; his willingness and humility in meekness of spirit to submit unto the admonitions of his brethren and discipline of the church; and his resolution to continue in his duty against all trouble and persecution.

In all which having declared himself, professed his willingness, and promised

his endeavours, by the help of God; the minister likewise shall demand of the people concerning their willingness to receive and acknowledge him as the minister of Christ; and to obey and submit unto him, as having rule over them in the Lord; and to maintain, encourage, and assist him in all the parts of his office.

Which being mutually promised by the people, the presbytery, or the ministers sent from them for ordination, shall solemnly set him apart to the office and work of the ministry by laying their hands on him, which is to be accompanied with a short prayer or blessing.

This prayer and blessing being ended, let the minister who preached briefly exhort him to consider of the greatness of his office and work, the danger of negligence both to himself and his people, the blessing which will accompany his faithfulness in this life and that to come; and withal exhort the people to carry themselves to him, as to their minister in the Lord, according to their solemn promise made before. And so by prayer commending both him and his flock to the grace of God, after singing of a psalm, let the assembly be dismissed with a blessing.

JOHN BARRON.

For the Children.

PAYING FOR THE BROKEN WINDOW.

THE bell of Hart School had hardly ceased ringing, when with a rush, the boys came down the steps. Somehow order was evolved from confusion, and the boys were soon in full swing in a lively game of cricket. Harry Dicks was bowling. Stanley Orchard keeping wicket, Raymond Harman was in, and the other boys in the various positions as fielders.

Across the street was Mr. Storey's grocery, and he was greatly concerned whenever the boys came to play in the corner field, fearing that they might send the ball through the plate-glass window of his shop. He warned the boys repeatedly of the danger, but they did not seem to realise that there was any possibility of such a catastrophe,

It was in the second innings with the last "man" at the wicket, and only two runs needed to score a win for the "Lefts," "Betsy" Bobbet was taking a run for a short hit to leg when Don Glenn, in an anxious effort to get the ball in quickly to the wicket, made a wild throw. There was a crash of falling glass, a cry from Storey's shop, and a rush of boys from the field, and a sudden stillness reigned where but a few moments before all was the wildest excitement of a closely contested game, and not a boy to be seen.

"I'm going back," said Harry Dicks to "Betsy" as he suddenly stopped running after they had doubled round the corner of the road.

"Going back! What for?" gasped fat "Betsy" out of breath and full of astonishment. "You'll be arrested; Storey said he'd have us taken up if we broke his window."

"I'm going back, anyhow, for my grandfather has always said to me; 'If you do anything wrong, don't be mean enough to run away, or put the blame on anyone else;' so I'm going back," insisted Harry.

"You didn't break it," urged "Betsy," as Harry went down the road.

"But I was one of the fellows, and I am responsible for a part of it," and he kept on while "Betsy" went to find the other boys.

When Harry got to the shop quite a crowd of people had gathered, and among them a policeman.

"I'm one of the boys, Mr. Storey, who were playing in the field and I've come back to tell you," said Harry timidly, for Mr. Storey was scolding fearfully.

"You are, are you?" exclaimed the angry man, as he seized Harry by the arm and dragged him over to the officer. "Arrest him! Arrest him, at once! The young scamp!" shrieked Mr. Storey, beside himself with rage and excitement "I'm going to put a stop to this ball-playing about here once for all, if I have to put the whole lot of you good-for-nothing rascals in prison to do it."

"Don't—don't have me arrested," pleaded Harry, greatly frightened by Mr. Storey's anger. "That would worry my mother, and be a disgrace."

"Disgrace! Disgrare!" fairly yelled the angry shopkeeper. "Isn't it a disgrace to break windows which cost ten pounds? Arrest him, constable!"

"I'll work for you, Mr. Storey, till it's all paid for, but don't have me taken up, please don't!" pleaded Harry.

"Pay for it! How long do you think it will take you to earn enough to pay for it?" demanded Mr. Storey,

"I'll work till it's paid for, no matter how long it takes," answered Harry.

The policeman knew Harry's mother, and also his grandfather, with whom he lived, and came to his aid and advised Mr. Storey not to insist on having the boy arrested, but to give him a chance to pay for the broken window.

"All right!" said he, as he grew calm. "I need a boy, and he might as well pay for it that way as in any other. When will you begin?" he asked Harry.

"To-morrow, after school," said Harry, promptly; but you know that I can only work on Saturdays and holidays"

"That's when I shall need you most, so I'll look for you to-morrow; and, remember, if you don't come I'll have you arrested yet."

"I'll be here," promised Harry, as he started homeward when Mr. Storey finally released his hold on his arm.

Mr. Storey agreed to pay Harry eight shillings a week, and, as Harry learned when he was shown the bill for the new plate-glass window, he would have to work twenty-five weeks to pay for it.

Harry worked faithfully, and Mr. Storey declared he never had a better boy about the place; but the boy missed many an hour's fun, and not once during the autumn did he have a Saturday to himself.

"How much did that window cost?" asked Don Glenn one day at school.

"Whew!" he exclaimed, when Harry told him. "That's a big lot of money."

"Say Dicks, did you know "Betsy's" working after school?" asked Ben Norris one day, "and I'm going to get a job to-morrow, and so is Tom Masters."

"You are? What are the fellows coming to?" asked Harry. "I saw Orchard and Smith selling 'Bulletins' last night."

"Oh, the fellows are anxious for jobs—want to make money, I expect," answered Ben.

Harry was finishing his tenth week of work, and had credit for four pounds on the bill for the window, when, as he was preparing to close the shop on Saturday night, he was aroused by the tramping of feet, and fourteen boys, led by "Betsy," marched in.

"Hello? What do you fellows want?" asked Harry greatly surprised.

"We want to see Mr. Storey Is he in?" answered "Betsy."

"I'm here. What do you want?" inquired Mr. Storey, as he came from behind his desk.

"We're the rest of the fellows who were playing cricket in the field the day the window was broken, and we ran away," said "Betsy," who was the spokesman; "but we've come back to pay our share of it," And each fellow dived down into his pockets, and placed thirteen shillings and fourpence on the counter.

"I was wondering whether you fellows would be mean enough to let one boy pay for it all," said Mr. Storey, as he counted the money.

"Not quite, although we were afraid to come back like Dicks," answered Ben Norris shamefacedly.

"You will have some money to take home with you to-night, Harry—quite a nice sum," said Mr. Storey, as he gladly refunded all Harry had paid over his share, "and here's something for faithful services," and he laid a bright sovereign in his hand. "You will not need to work any longer for the window, but if you'll continue to work for me, I'll give you four shillings more a week; or if you prefer to work for the same old wages, you may break another glass," and Mr. Storey smiled as he looked at the other boys.

"Thank you, Mr. Storey, I'd rather work for the increase and have no windows to pay for," said Harry, as he held his money tightly.

"You boys are a better lot than I thought," was Mr. Storey's parting words, as they filed out of his shop.—Messenger for the Children.

Reports.

Banbridge.—A meeting of the members of the First Presbyterian (Non-Subscribing) Congregation was held on Sunday morning, November 26th, to

receive a deputation from Synod in reference to the Sustentation Fund. The chair was taken by Mr. J. Smyth, M.A., and there was a good attendance. The claims of the Fund were ably advocated by the Convener of the Committee of Management (Rev. J. Worthington), and after a good discussion, a resolution was unanimously passed, on the motion of Mr. Webster Glass, LL.B., seconded by Mr. James D. Smyth, pledging the congregation to support the Fund.

Comber.—A meeting on behalf of the Sustentation Fund was held in the schoolroom, Comber, on Tuesday evening, December 5th. There was a large attendance. The deputation from the Sustentation Fund Committee consisted of Dr. John Campbell, Rev. H. J. Rossington, and the Rev. J. Worthington, who delivered vigorous addresses on the need and object of the Fund. At the close of the meeting a resolution was proposed by Mr. J. M. Andrews, welcoming the proposal to form the Fund and pledging the Comber congregation to promote its success. The resolution was unanimously carried. A local committee was formed, with Mr. David Munn as treasurer and Mr. J. M. Orr as secretary, to visit the members of the congregation and solicit contributions. The Comber Church has taken the matter up with earnestness and enthusiasm, and it is hoped that a contribution will be received from every person in the congregation over 16 years of age. Already Comber has promised nearly £500 to the Fund.

Downpatrick.—On Wednesday evening, 6th December, a congregational meeting was held for the purpose of hearing the deputation at present engaged in visiting our churches regarding the proposed Sustentation Fund. The gentlemen composing the deputation were the Moderator, Rev. T. Dunkerley, Rev. J. Worthington, and Rev. G. L. Phelps, each of whom made an interesting speech on various aspects of the subject. The Moderator explained the principle on which the Sustentation Fund was based, viz., the stronger congregation helping the weaker, the same principle as was advocated by Dr. Chalmers and which has proved so successful in Scotland. Mr. Phelps spoke of the fundamental principles of the Non-Subscribing Churches which they have united to defend and hand on to posterity. Mr. Worthington gave a clear explanation of the conditions and advantages of the Fund. After hearing the addresses, Mr. S. C. N. Lowry, treasurer, proposed, and Mr. Hugh Dickson, secretary, seconded a resolution expressing approval of the scheme and promising aid as far as possible, which was carried unanimously. Owing to the tempestuous weather there was a small attendance, but those who came could not help admiring the courage of the deputation in motoring from Belfast on such a night, and, on the other hand, the members of the deputation fully appreciated the zeal of those who in spite of the elements had turned out to hear them. It is hoped that as our people come better to understand the nature of the Fund they will give it their hearty support.

Dublin.—On November 29th, a meeting was held in connection with the Stephen's Green Church, for the purpose of considering the desirability of giving practical support to the Sustentation Fund of the Non-Subscribing Presbyterian Church. At the invitation of the congregation, the Rev. Thomas Dunkerley, B.A. (Moderator), and the Rev. H. J. Rossington, M.A., B.D., were in attendance as a deputation for explaining the character of the scheme. The proceedings commenced with tea, after which the Rt. Hon. W. D. Andrews took the chair, and emphasised the object of the meeting. He then called upon the members of the deputation to speak, and after they had fully and lucidly set forth the necessary particulars, he invited questions from members of the audience. These were forthcoming, as were also satisfactory answers thereto. It was then resolved to appeal for the support of the members of the Stephen's Green Congregation, and with this practical purpose in view, Mr. James Andrews and Professor Orr kindly undertook to act as local secretaries of the Fund.

Holywood.—The Annual Meeting of the congregation was held in the Schoolroom, on Monday evening, December 4th. In spite of most unfavourable weather, there was a very good attendance. Tea having been served from 7-30 to 8 o'clock, the chair was taken by the minister (Rev.

G. L. Phelps). The Annual Report and Statement of Accounts, which gave evidence of good work done during the year, were adopted on the motion of the Chairman, seconded by Mr. Omar C. Nelson, both of whom made feeling reference to the loss sustained by the death of Mr. Richard Patterson. Officers for the ensuing year having been elected, and a vote of thanks to the choir having been passed, the Chairman briefly reviewed the past year, and made a strong appeal for continued loyalty to the Church. A deputation from the Sustentation Fund Committee was then introduced, and vigorous and interesting addresses were delivered by the Rev. Joseph Worthington, the Rev. Thomas Dunkerley, and Dr. John Campbell, explaining the working of the Fund and advocating its claims. On the motion of Mr. Omar C. Nelson, seconded by Mr. Samuel M'Crum, a resolution was unanimously passed thanking the deputation and pledging the meeting to the hearty support of the Fund. Some contributions were promised at the meeting, and it is hoped that ultimately every member of the congregation will subscribe to the Fund.

Moneyrea.—On Sunday morning, December 3rd, a deputation from the Sustentation Fund Committee, consisting of the Rev. Joseph Worthington, B.A., of Mountpottinger, and John Miller Andrews, Esq., of Comber, visited our Church here at Moneyrea. In place of a sermon, Mr. Worthington delivered an address on the Fund, in which he lucidly outlined its main features, and with convincing point and vigour advocated its adoption. Then followed an address from Mr. Andrews, and as a layman presented an aspect of the Fund most powerful in its appeal. The practical touch of the business man's insight was there, and coupled with it the glow of an enthusing zeal. Having listened attentively to the addresses from the deputation, all felt the strong pull of this Fund in making us stronger to maintain our heritage both individually and collectively as churches. Questions respecting the Fund being asked and answered, Mr. A. Kennedy Stewart moved a resolution adopting the Fund; this was seconded by Mr. Robert Frame, and carried unanimously. Thus ended a memorable visit, and we trust a fruitful one.

Moneyrea United Temperance Guild.—Under the auspices of the above Guild a delightfully pleasant "Social" was held on Friday evening, December 8th, in the Old School-room. The occasion was also opportune for the excellent presentation made just before supper. During the months of September, October, and November a Manual Instruction Class, under the direction of the County Down Committee of Agriculture and Technical Instruction, occupied the School-room, and the members of the class, desirous of marking their sensibility of the patient and unwearying services of the Instructor, Mr. John M'Meekan, took advantage of the time to realise this in a tangible way. The earnest of their wish was two high class volumes of the most approved standard works on "Carpentry" and "Joinery." After a pointed and searching introductory address, in which the subjects of temperance and amusements figured, by the Rev. M. Watkins, Mr. Hugh Frame, of Gransha, in a few but well chosen words presented the volumes to Mr. M'Meekan. With characteristic modesty Mr. M'Meekan, thanked the Class for its valuable gift, and remarked in the course of a humorous speech, that in the volumes he had just received he would surely find two unfailing friends. Some day, in the near future he hoped, a Class would again be held in this School-room at Moneyrea. Supper ended, for which the company present felt grateful to the ladies of the Guild Committee, Mr. James Blair again took charge of the ceremonies, and to the music excellently rendered by Miss Minnie Kennedy and Mr. T. J. Millen, dancing was kept going to the small hours of the morning. Singing of "Auld Lang Syne" brought a very successful and happy social to a close.

Newry.—On Tuesday evening, December 12th, a social meeting under the auspices of the Guild in connection with the above church was held in the school-room, Needham Place. The entertainment, which was of a most enjoyable character, was largely attended by the members and a number of invited friends from other churches, and was given by the lady members of the Guild. The school-room was nicely decorated, and in one corner of it a neat stage was erected for the performers.

The following ladies presided over the tea tables :—Mrs. Slipper, Mrs. Thompson, Mrs. Henning, and Mrs. Jack Rowland, assisted by the Misses Warnock, Thompson, M'Combe (2), Megaw, Mitchell, and Lockhart. The proceedings were opened shortly before eight o'clock by the singing a portion of the 100th Psalm, and prayer by Rev. George J. Slipper, minister of the church, after which tea and cake of various kinds were partaken of. Miss Warnock, on the motion of Miss Maggie M'Combe, took the chair. The Chairman thanked the members for the honour they had conferred upon her in asking her to preside over the meeting that night. It was what was designated as a ladies' night, and she heartily congratulated the ladies on their efforts. When the time arrived for the gentlemen to have their night, she hoped they would be as successful in providing them with a similar function. They had a long and interesting programme to get through, and she would not detain them any longer from its enjoyment. The programme consisted of piano duet, Miss Thompson and Miss M'Combe; song, Messrs. Scott and Mahood; piano solo, Miss Edie Gibson; sketch (Biddy from Cork), Misses M'Combe, Berry, Scott, Megaw, Mitchell, (2); song, Master Willie Scott; vocal duet, Miss Chareen Pinkerton and Miss Ina R. M'Combe; quartette, Messrs. Scott and Mahood; sketch (Silence Under Difficulties), Misses Mitchell, Thompson, Crothers and M'Combe, and Messrs. Mahood, Megaw, and Thompson; accompanists, Miss M. M'Combe and Master Oswald Mahood. All the items were thoroughly enjoyed, and were loudly applauded and encored. At the conclusion of the programme, Mrs. Slipper said as the ladies were in possession that night she begged to propose that the best thanks of the meeting be accorded to Miss Warnock for so ably presiding, and to the other ladies who had so kindly organised and carried through the very pleasant entertainment they had enjoyed that night. Mrs. Rowland seconded the motion, which was passed amidst applause. The Chairman replied, and said all the credit was due to the ladies who were responsible for the entertainment. They had succeeded admirably, and had left nothing undone to make them happy. Rev. Mr. Slipper, on behalf of the male members of the Guild, also thanked the ladies and performers. Mr. C. Warnock seconded, and the motion was passed by acclamation. Games of various kinds were then engaged in, and a very enjoyable evening was brought to a close by the singing of the National Anthem, and the pronouncing of the Benediction by Rev. Mr. Slipper.

Templepatrick.—A meeting of the congregation was held in the Roughfort School on Friday evening, 8th December, to hear addresses relative to the formation of the Sustentation Fund. Unfortunately for the attendance, the weather throughout the day had been of the tempestuous kind, with heavy and continuous fall of rain, and this fact no doubt reduced our audience by at least one half. Towards evening indeed the wind and rain ceased, but too late to move those of our people who live at a distance. About fifty were present. After tea, which was kindly provided by Dr. Campbell, the minister, Rev. A. Turner, took the chair, and having briefly made reference to the Fund, introduced the two speakers, viz., Dr. Campbell and Mr. John Millar Andrews, to the audience. With regard to the doctor, indeed the introduction was a matter of form, the honoured name which he bears having been associated with the Templepatrick congregation for a period of one hundred and fifteen years. Mr. Andrews made his "first appearance," and it is safe to say that he left behind him an excellent and lasting impression, and that our people will look for a realization of his voluntarily expressed hope that he may sometime return to address them again and tell them more stories. The two addresses were listened to throughout with evident interest and appreciation, and the speakers made it quite clear that though the augmentation of ministers' stipends was the immediate object in view, the main reason for the formation of the Fund was based on a desire to secure the future well-being of our Church. After brief discussion. Mr. John Moore moved, and Mr. John M'Keen seconded, this resolution:—"That the best thanks of this meeting be given to Dr. Campbell and Mr. Andrews for their admirable addresses here to-night; that we pledge ourselves to support the Fund to the best of our ability; and that we will invite every member of the

Templepatrick congregation to become a subscriber thereto." The resolution was passed heartily, and a committee was formed to carry out the intention. The meeting was closed with the Benediction.

Echoes.

There is still some confusion of thought as to the difference between a Unitarian and a Vegetarian. Most of us have read of ludicrous instances of it. Here is another, given recently by the Lord Mayor of Birmingham—Alderman Bowater—at a gathering of Sunday school teachers. Having replied to the inquiry of a boy to the best of his ability, as to what a Unitarian was, the youth said—"Yes; there's one of them lives up our yard, and last Sunday, one of his children was choked with a piece of meat." "I replied" said the Mayor, "that that was very sad." To this the youth responded—"But a Unitarian, and meat!" Surely darkness covers the earth and gross darkness the people now, as it did in the time of Isaiah.

* *

While the average number of deaths of adults was only a little over 15 per thousand for the third quarter of 1911, that of infants under one year was over 200 per thousand? These last figures indicate a very serious state of things, which must be the result of either ignorance, or wilful negligence, or both combined. Which? The figures relate to England and Wales. Could Ireland show a cleaner bill of health? This latter average is much above the usual one. If owing to the long-continued drought, it has told only upon the helpless little ones.

* *

Mr. Harold Begbie, a very popular author, has recently issued a book entitled "Other Sheep," in which he speaks strongly regarding the presentation of religious questions by missionaries to the Indian mind. I know nothing as to what denomination Mr. Begbie belongs, but he appears to me to speak just as a Unitarian would speak of the views presented by the ordinary Orthodox missionary for the acceptance of the Indian people. Brahminism, he says, prefers its own ancient philosophy of Pessimism to that presented by clericalism, and adds, that—"It has no knowledge of Christianity as the gospel of Optimism. It rejects not the Heaven—Father of Jesus, but the hostile God of the priest, who must be propitiated and conciliated. It rejects not the love of God, who has made the immense hazards of heaven and hell, to turn upon intellectual assent to a set of theological dogmas." Yet, many in India, who are in a position to judge, Mr. Begbie adds, believe that a revolution in thought is silently taking place as the result of Christian effort. Some regard the outlook with favour; others do not. Evidently, the theology that is presented is unwelcome, while the life and spirit of Jesus have a fascinating influence over the minds of many of the Indian people.

* *

Of those imprisoned in London in one year, 18 per cent. were Roman Catholics, while the Nonconformist population is thought to be from six to eight times greater than that of the Roman Catholic, and yet the criminal percentage was only 2! How is this?

* *

It appears the sale of livings in the Church of England is still practised. The Dean of Lincoln is ashamed of it, and has raised his voice in protest against the system. There was formerly a well-known auction room in London for the sale of Church livings. Let me give a glimpse of the proceedings there, taken from the late William Howitt's *History of Priestcraft*. Let us imagine we can see the sleek, old auctioneer, George Robbins, sitting aloft with hammer in hand, and caustic tongue in check. After dilating on the advantages offered by the Church to its clergy, he says—"Let me see: the income of this living is altogether £2,000, now the tithes are commuted. . . . . It's a rent now, gentlemen, it's a rent, and comes in cheerfully, easily, graciously, almost of itself. It is within thirty miles of London, in a fine sporting neighbourhood, and"—"How old's the incumbent?" shouts a short, round, thick man, in rusty black, with a great bundle of papers in his hand. "Old? Why my friend, you could not well wish him older. He's turned 80." "And means to live to a

100," cried another voice. "Is he ill?' bellows another. "Is he ill?" says George Robbins. "That's a delicate point, gentlemen. I do not like to enter into delicate matters, but my learned friend here," turning to a pale young man sitting close under the desk, the legal broker of Church livings "has seen him lately, and I dare say he can tell you." "Is he ill, old—?" "Why, no, not ill, exactly. I should not say ill, but he's not strong." "My friend is cautious, gentlemen," said Robbins. "The worthy old man, he says, is not ill, but he's not strong." I leave you to judge for yourselves. Depend upon it, he's soon for kingdom come." The living was knocked down for £10,000. There is in the book more of a similar character, as there is also in Cobbett's *Legacy to Parsons.*

* *

Some geologists have hazarded the statement that man has lived on the earth for 100,000 years. Evidence, it is now declared, is forthcoming to show that he has been here probably 500,000 years! This leaves the former estimate far, far away. The statement is based on the recent discovery of peculiarly shaped flint implements, in much earlier geological strata than they have ever been found in before, namely, the Suffolkcrag. Instead of being knife, or dagger-shaped, they are keel-shaped, thick on one side and tapered to an edge on the other, and at the same time curved as the prow of a boat. They will probably give rise to an interesting discussion as to the character of the men who fabricated them. W. S. S.

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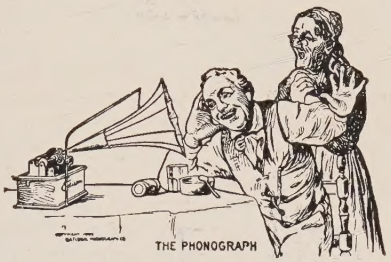

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Whereon each one of us may write
His word or two, and then comes night.
Though thou have time
But for a line, be that sublime;
Not failure, but low aim is crime.

—*J. R. Lowell.*

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